

Message Text

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20

ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SCS-03

SCA-01 /052 W

----- 017372

R 070548Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3230

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

CDR JCRC CP SAMAE SAN THAI

SECDEF

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 2388

D/PW FOR SIEVERTS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, LA

SUBJ: AMCIT CHARLES M. DEAN

1. I HAD A PRIVATE MOMENT WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AT A RECEPTION ON APRIL 5TH AND TOLD HIM THAT I HAD BEEN THINKING OVER OUR DISCUSSION OF THE DEAN/SHARMAN CASE THE DAY BEFORE. FRANKLY, I WAS UNIMPRESSED BY THE "THOROUGH INVESTIGATION" OF THE PATHET LAO, BUT IF ONE ACCEPTED IT THEN LAOS WAS FACED WITH AN AFFAIR WHICH WAS COMPARABLE TO THE MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF JIM THOMPSON IN MALAYSIA SOME YEARS AGO. JIM THOMPSON WAS A CELEBRATED FIGURE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA BUT HE WAS WELL-CONNECTED IN AMERICA AS IS THE DEAN BOY AND THIS AFFAIR MIGHT EASILY BECOME ANOTHER ORIENTAL MYSTERY WHICH WOULD ELICIT A GOOD DEAL OF PRESS INTEREST AND INVESTIGATORY ACTIVITY. I SUGGESTED THAT THE PRIME MINISTER CONSIDER THE CASE IN THAT LIGHT.

2. SOUVANNA AGREED WITH ME. HE SAID HE HAD ALREADY
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SPOKEN TO THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR WHO IS LEAVING ON

A TRIP AND THAT HE WOULD ALSO ASK GENERAL KHAMHOU TO CONDUCT A FULL INVESTIGATION. (KHAMHOU IS HIS CONFIDANT ON SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE MATTERS.) I SMELL THE NORTH VIETNAMESE IN THIS HISTOIRE, HE SAID, BUT THE GOVERNMENT MUST VERIFY THE FACTS WHICH HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED IN ORDER TO BE IN A SOLID POSITION.

3. COMMENT: IT WAS OBVIOUS TO CHAPMAN AND TO ME THAT SOUVANNA WAS FAR FROM IMPRESSED BY SOUPHANOUVONG'S BLAND DENIAL OF PATHET LAO INVOLVEMENT IN THIS CASE. HE IS ALSO VERY WORLDLY AND SENSITIVE TO SOCIAL SUBTLETIES, AND HE SENSES THAT THE DISAPPEARANCE OF CHARLIE DEAN IS NOT A MATTER WHICH IS GOING TO FADE AWAY. I AM VERY PLEASED THAT HE HAS ACCEPTED OUR SUGGESTION OF STARTING AN INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION AND HAVE TIPPED OFF SISOUK AND OTHERS. WE WILL BRIEF KHAMHOU AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY.
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

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